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REVIEWS AND NOTES

UNIFORM STATISTICS OF MENTAL DISEASES IN THE UNITED STATES.

The American Medico-Psychological Association at its meeting held in New York, in May, 1917, adopted the report of its Committee on Statistics which provided for a system of uniform statistics in institutions for mental diseases, and appointed a standing Committee on Statistics to promote the introduction of the system throughout the country. This committee met in New York City on February 7, 1918, and in coöperation with the National Committee for Mental Hygiene outlined a plan of procedure.

The National Committee has established a Bureau of Uniform Statistics and has received a special gift to defray the initial expenses of the work of collecting statistics from institutions for the insane. As close relationships have always existed between the American Medico-Psychological Association and the National Committee, it was thought wise for the Bureau of Uniform Statistics of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene to have the work of introducing the new system and of collecting statistics from the institutions carried out by the Bureau.

In accordance with this arrangement, the Bureau, with the assistance of the Committee on Statistics of the American Medico-Psychological Association, has prepared this manual to assist the institutions in compiling their annual statistics and has printed a series of forms to be used in preparing statistical reports. The manual and duplicate forms will be furnished free to all coöperating institutions, and it is earnestly hoped that they will be generally adopted, so that a national system of statistics of mental diseases may become an actuality.

The manual gives instructions for the proper completion of the forms, with respect to the use of abbreviations, etc. On pages 12 to 29 a full display of the titles in the classification of mental diseases approved by the American Medico-Psychological Association is shown. A series of eighteen primary statistical tables is recommended for the systematic presentation of the data. The pamphlet is published by the Bureau of Statistics, National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 50 Union Square, New York City.

E. W. KOPR.

STATISTICAL STUDY OF THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC.

The American Public Health Association, Vital Statistics Section, appointed a Committee on Statistical Study of the Influenza Epidemic on November 20, 1918. Under the auspices of this committee, a meeting of the state and municipal registrars in the eastern states was held at the University of Pennsylvania, Hygiene Laboratory, Philadelphia, Pa., on November 29 and 30, 1918. There were present, also, at this initial con-

ference, several private statisticians interested in the public health statistics of the epidemic and the results to be derived from study of such data. A series of suggestions was made up, mimeographed and sent to statistical and public health workers for criticism. At the meeting of the Vital Statistics Section in Chicago on December 11, the committee submitted a report on its activities and asked for authority to continue further inquiry into a program of statistical study of the epidemic. The section authorized the continuance of the committee and provided that representatives of the United States Bureau of the Census, of the United States army and navy; of the United States Public Health Service, of the state and municipal health boards, and the various, statistical, sociological, actuarial and economic associations be represented thereon. The committee was specifically authorized to act in an advisory capacity to outline first, the various sources of data, the minimum standards of tabular and registration practice to be observed by several organizations providing data, and second, to bring in recommendations on the pathometric or mathematical analysis of published epidemic data. The committee was divided into four sub-committees as follows:

Sub-Committee A: *Registration and Tabulation Practice of the Federal Departments.* (Wm. H. Davis, M.D., chief statistician, Division of Vital Statistics, Bureau of the Census, *Chairman*; Richard C. Lappin, *Recorder*.)

Sub-Committee B: *Registration and Tabulation Practice of the State Departments and Commissions.* (Otto R. Eichel, M.D., director, Division of Vital Statistics, New York State Department of Health, Albany, *Chairman*; Edwin W. Kopf, *Recorder*.)

Sub-Committee C: *Registration and Tabulation Practice of Municipal Boards of Health and of Private Public Health Agencies.* (Chas. Scott Miller, M.D., Philadelphia Department of Health, Philadelphia, Pa.

Sub-Committee D: *Pathometry* (mathematical analysis and interpretation) *of the Epidemic.* (Charles C. Grove, Ph.D., Columbia University, *Chairman*; Arne Fisher, F. S. S., *Recorder*.)

Mr. E. W. Kopf was delegated to act as chairman of the General Committee and to coördinate the work of the several sub-committees. The General Committee of the Vital Statistics Section was authorized to coöperate in statistical matters with the Influenza Reference Committee of the entire Association.*

FEDERAL STATISTICS.

At the Washington meeting of Sub-Committee A, the following subjects were taken up:

Estimates of population: Obtaining estimates of army and navy populations by five-year age periods, through random sampling if necessary, but by direct tabulation of army and navy enlistment records if possible;

Causes of death reported during the epidemic were to be classified in accordance with the Manual of the International List of Causes of

* See "Influenza Bulletin" *American Public Health Association*, Boston, Dec. 13, 1918.

Death and the Index of Joint Causes as published by the Bureau of the Census;

Infant mortality was to be studied in such manner as to show what part of this mortality was probably due to birth mortality arising out of influenzal illness of the mother and to the factor of neglect;

Norms of mortality during September, October and November were also considered.

It was also indicated that it was unwise to draw any conclusions from statistics of variations in bacterial flora at various stages in the epidemic or in different localities unless it was shown that all laboratory conditions had been properly controlled. The army was requested to supply statistics as to influenzal sickness classified by five-year age periods, by date of onset, by duration of illness in days, by principal complications, showing fatality or lethal rates for 100 completed cases.

STATE STATISTICS.

Sub-Committee B considered the more intimate statistics of the epidemic in the states. The sub-committee pointed out that in certain cities and for certain states valuable data was available in the back files which would lead to the determination of the norm of mortality during the fall and winter months of the year. The social statistics of the epidemic were emphasized. It was urged that statistics of the effect of the epidemic upon the family should be collected. State and municipal governments were urged to make preparations necessary for the proper statistical study of the epidemic data.

MUNICIPAL STATISTICS.

The Sub-Committee on Municipal Statistics discussed chiefly the available data in the files of maternity clinics and visiting nursing associations. It was indicated that thorough study of these records would bring out some of the important facts on the obstetrical data of the epidemic.

MATHEMATICAL STUDY OF THE EPIDEMIC.

The Sub-Committee on Pathometry has outlined for itself the problems of mathematically testing and graduating the crude compiled data for norms of infant and adult mortality. The sub-committee has in mind the frequency curves of mortality from the several important causes of death during the fall and winter months of the year, especially the curves for infant mortality considered as (a) "birth mortality" and (b) "true infantile mortality." By means of modern analytic methods it was aimed to determine the true "excess mortality" during the epidemic. It was planned also to fit various curves to the observed epidemic data, to compute the equations and the constants of the distributions in the several areas under observation (mean, mode, dispersion, skewness, "excess").

The Sub-Committee on Pathometry also anticipated that it could determine by delicate mathematical tests the *probable* date of the beginning, "peak" and ending of the several waves or phases of the epidemic in the

various communities, and possibly, the approximate differential equations representing the several recurrences or recrudescences of the epidemic could be established.

METHODS OF INFLUENZA STUDY APPLIED IN PREVENTIVE MEDICINE
GENERALLY.

The methods of higher analysis applied to the influenza epidemic data can be of service to preventive medicine in the study of other diseases. The profession of statistics is confronted with an opportunity for unparalleled service to the medical sciences, among them preventive medicine.

EDWIN W. KOPF, *General Chairman*,

Committee on Statistical Study of the Influenza Epidemic, Section on
Vital Statistics, American Public Health Association.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS.

The list of the publications of the American Statistical Association, which hitherto have been printed in each quarterly number, has assumed such dimensions that it seems a waste of space to repeat it four times a year. Hereafter the complete list will be printed only once a year and reference made in each issue of the particular number in which the list is given. The last complete list is to be found in the December number and orders should, as before, be addressed to

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